



# MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

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Martin O'Malley  
Governor

Robert M. Summers, Ph.D.  
Secretary

Anthony G. Brown  
Lieutenant Governor

February 26, 2014

The Honorable Dereck E. Davis  
Members of the Economic Matters Committee  
Room 231  
House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Re: Letter of Support House Bill 1076 – Agriculture – Poultry Litter – Energy-Generating Cooperative Program**

Dear Chairman Davis and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE or “the Department”) has reviewed House Bill 1076 and would like to express its support for this legislation.

HB 1076 would further Maryland's efforts to achieve the reductions of nutrient loads discharged to the waters of the Chesapeake Bay that are required under EPA's Chesapeake Bay TMDL. In particular, HB1076 should lead to reductions of phosphorous loads caused by runoff of fertilizer from agricultural lands. The management of the significant loads of poultry litter generated in Maryland annually is an ongoing challenge. Additionally, agricultural statistics report increases in poultry population, which results in an increase in manure, only adding to the management challenge.

The establishment under HB 1076 of an energy-generating cooperative program would promote the utilization of poultry litter as an energy source and thereby, through burning and anaerobic decomposition, reduce the vast quantities of phosphorous-rich manure that must be applied to crops as fertilizer, maintained in storage facilities, or transported and used elsewhere, all of which can potentially contribute to the excessive nutrient loads that are degrading water quality and impacting aquatic life resources in the Chesapeake Bay.

Thank you for your consideration of this information as you review HB 1076. Please contact me at 410-260-6301 or by email at [jeffrey.fretwell@maryland.gov](mailto:jeffrey.fretwell@maryland.gov) if you would like to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Fretwell

Cc: George (Tad) S. Aburn, Jr., Director, Air and Radiation Management Administration

